

“Child care is a two-generation workforce issue. Just as I want our customers to see us at our best, Ohio needs to focus on the highest quality of care for the dollars it invests. This means you don’t cut corners—you invest to get results.”

Kevin McDonnell, President & CEO of Skyline Chili ¹

Quality Early Childhood Education: A 21st Century Workforce, Business, & Economic Issue

Business leaders have long cited “workforce development” as their top public policy concern. For businesses to compete, grow, and succeed, they must build a strong workforce foundation, which includes recruitment and retention of reliable and productive workers. The decision of whether to work and a working parent’s reliability, dependability, and productivity can be greatly affected by whether they have access to quality, affordable child care.

Investing in quality early childhood education and expanding access to publicly funded child care will help more people enter and remain in the labor force, thereby addressing workforce challenges and supporting Ohio’s business community. These public policy solutions also improve outcomes for our youngest Ohioans—our children and grandchildren—ensuring our workforce of tomorrow is prepared and ready to excel and Ohio businesses will have the talent they need to thrive into the future.

Ohio’s Economy
LOSES approx.
\$1.7 BILLION
per year
due to
child care
issues.





Ohio's Workforce of TODAY

“*This country needs to decide how we remove barriers for women to work, and one of them is access to child care.*”

*Suzanne Clark, U.S. Chamber of Commerce President and CEO*²

In an environment where labor shortages are pervasive across the state and country, access to quality child care is an economic issue.

A recent statewide Ohio poll found that **more than 4 in 10** working parents with children under the age of 5 have **had to cut back on hours to care for their children** in recent months.³

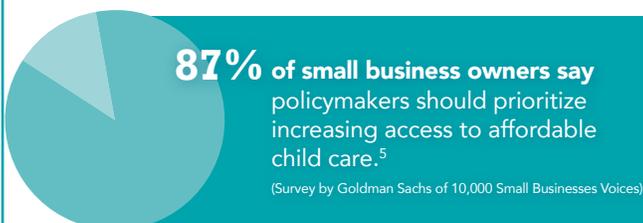


More than **1 in 3** working parents in Ohio said child care challenges have **disrupted their work** in recent months, causing them to either miss work, leave early, or lose focus.

When Ohio parents with young children were asked what **having child care allows them to do** or would allow them to do, the most common response was **“WORK MORE.”**

Access to quality child care is vital to growing Ohio's workforce and economy.

Ohio's economy loses an estimated **\$1.7 billion per year due to child care issues.**⁴



In September 2021, Cleveland Federal Reserve President Loretta Mester said that the **lack of affordable child care is holding back employees from rejoining the workforce.**



Ohio's Workforce of TOMORROW

“*In Ohio's most highly rated early education programs, young children are learning early literacy and math skills, teamwork, empathy, persistence, and resiliency...We must adopt a long-term view, knowing we will reap the dividends of our investment for years to come”*

David Melin, Regional President of PNC Bank in Dayton, on behalf of PNC's Ohio Regional Presidents ⁶

Access to quality early childhood education is a two-generation workforce issue.

80% of a child's brain development occurs by age 3.

These developments build the foundation for soft skills and lifetime success.

WITH

ONLY 41% of Ohio kindergartners entering the classroom ready to learn,

AND

ONLY 55% of Ohio students proficient in 8th grade math...

WORKFORCE READINESS IS IN JEOPARDY.

ONLY 43% of Ohio's workforce has a degree or credential for the jobs that are available today.

YET, for Ohio to be competitive and have the skills required for today's in-demand jobs, **65%** of our workforce needs a 2-year, 4-year, or certified marketable skill.⁷

Supporting investments in quality early childhood education is a wise business decision for taxpayers and the state of Ohio.

Dollars spent to advance quality early learning and healthy development produce substantially higher returns, allowing for decreased state spending or increased state investment in alternative initiatives such as workforce training, small business and economic development tax incentives, broadband infrastructure, and more.

EXPANDING ACCESS to quality child care generates a **10% ANNUAL RETURN** on public investment through various economic, health, and educational benefits as well as significant cost-savings for taxpayers.⁸

“For employees with young children, high quality and affordable childcare is essential to restoring a vigorous economy.”

Robert O'Neill, President & CEO of Southgate Corporation in Newark⁹



@GroundworkOhio

How Can You Help?

Lean in and take action:



- Host a roundtable discussion, webinar, or event.
- Publish newsletter and/or blog post content.
- Identify business champions to engage on these important issues.
- Incorporate into a Public Policy Agenda.

- Provide testimony on pending legislation.
- Meet with your state and federal policymakers to discuss why these issues matter to you and your business.
- Write an op-ed or letter to the editor.



Stay informed, and learn more:



- **Groundwork Ohio Resource Library**
groundworkohio.org/resources
- **Ready, Set, Soar Videos**
by Groundwork Ohio:
readyssetsoaroh.org/resources
- **Untapped Potential: Economic Impact of Childcare Breakdowns in U.S. State**
uschamberfoundation.org/reports
- **The First Five Years Fund Blueprint for Progress**
ffyf.org/blueprint

Sources:

1. [Groundwork Ohio](#)
2. [Fortune](#)
3. [Groundwork Ohio](#)
4. [Council for a Strong America](#)
5. [Goldman Sachs](#)
6. [Ohio Senate Health Committee Testimony](#)
7. [Ohio Excels](#)
8. [University of Cincinnati Economics Center](#)
9. [Newark Advocate](#)



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